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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 002878

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/17/2014

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: S/P REISS RAISES GME, IRAQ, IRAN WITH TURKISH MFA

(U) Classified by Polcounselor John Kunstadter; reasons: 1.4 (b,d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: In May 7 meetings in Ankara, S/P Director Mitchell B. Reiss discussed USG policies toward 1) the transfer of sovereignty in Iraq; 2) the Greater Middle East Initiative (GMEI); 3) Iranian nuclear ambitions; and, 4) NATO's Istanbul Summit. Turkish MFA U/S Ugur Ziyal, Policy Planning Director Mehmet Akat, and Deputy U/S for Bilateral Affairs Ali Tuygan 1) noted the GOT's concerns about Kurdish independence in Northern Iraq; 2) welcomed continuing, close consultations with Turkey on GMEI; 3) expressed the GOT's concerns about regional fallout from a successful nuclear weapons development program in Iran; and, 4) asserted ongoing dialogue between the GOT and Arab leaders points to widespread distrust of NATO in Arab nations. S/P Reiss noted strong USG support for Turkey's EU candidacy, a firm USG commitment to establishing a sovereign Iraqi government, and stressed USG actions will bring justice and transparency to the cases of abuse in Iraqi prisons.

IRAQ

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12. (C) Ziyal, Akat and Tuygan asserted that Turkey's security depends heavily upon USG success in Iraq. Success will directly correlate, they told Reiss, with Iraqi involvement in the process. Reiss responded by noting strong USG commitment to a successful and timely transfer of authority. Reiss noted, however, that the USG would not leave Iraq until the job is finished. The ambassadors echoed hopes that governance in post-June 30 Iraq will be marked by a Brahimi plan that 1) adds legitimacy to the government by maximizing Iraqi self-determination; 2) emphasizes international participation; and, 3) maintains territorial integrity and discourages fracturing of ethnic groups. Allowing over-representation of Kurds in Iraqi governance or "too much independence" for Kurdish entities, especially in the north, creates the potential for problems they asserted. Particularly in the early stages of the new government, Ziyal noted, only Iraqis with leadership experience should govern. "This means supporting former leaders you know to be bad, instead of people you know will be worse."

GME

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13. (C) Responding to S/P Reiss's question concerning how the West can look beyond upcoming summits to maintain momentum on Arab reform, Ziyal, Akat and Tuygan stressed that success depends entirely on Arab perceptions about the reform process. Like the U.S., Turkey's foreign policy interests in the Greater Middle East, they noted, are tied to GMEI success. Akat and Tuygan echoed Ziyal's assertion that the GOT's support for the GMEI will continue, provided 1) the objective is to strengthen existing reform efforts; 2) reforms are implemented gradually; and, 3) regimes in target countries are willing to participate. Though Syria and Egypt recognize the need for reform and are slowly moving in that direction, Ziyal asserted, Washington should proceed cautiously because leaders currently view the GMEI as a threat to their regimes.

14. (C) The U.S. must also be realistic, Ziyal cautioned, that GMEI, like NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue, might be held hostage by the Middle East Peace Process. Try to take the Middle East perspective, he suggested, "when you're in Washington you don't see what's happening there." To Arabs, Israeli leadership is not credible and to the U.S., Palestinian leadership is not credible.

15. (C) In response to S/P Reiss's inquires about Turkish involvement in the GMEI, Ziyal asserted that Turkey is a good example for Arab nations, but he opined for reasons of

religion, Arabs won't want to emulate Turkey. Before Turkey's EU membership bid became a reality, Ziyal claimed, Arab neighbors shunned the GOT's secularist orientation. Ziyal said he believes Arab states now see Turkey as a window to Europe and motivation for some reforms. Reiss highlighted US support for Turkey's EU candidacy and noted that the GOT is well-positioned to contribute to Middle East reform initiatives.

IRAN  
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16. (C) In response to S/P Reiss's questions about Iran's nuclear weapons development ambitions, Ziyal, Akat and Tuygan, asserted the GOT will 1) continue diplomatic pressure for transparency in Iran's nuclear affairs; and 2) maintain support for Iranian compliance with International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspections. In the event Iran becomes a nuclear power, the GOT will 1) consider Iran's nuclear weapons a direct threat; and, 2) continue to rely on the nuclear umbrella of NATO.

17. (C) According to Ziyal, Akat and Tuygan, the ongoing power struggle between conservative and liberal mullahs in Iran continues to erode the current regime's authority. Akat noted, however, that even if liberal reformists gain power, any new regime's position on further attempts to develop nuclear weapons would be unclear. The GOT is sending a clear message to Iran that nuclear weapons in the region cannot be tolerated, though Ziyal said he believes, "Iran will get the bomb."

NEWS CLIPS  
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18. (U) The Turkish Daily News published the following news clip on May 8, 2004, regarding S/P Director Reiss' visit to Ankara. BEGIN TEXT: U.S. Official in Ankara to discuss Iraq, GMEI. Director of policy planning for the U.S. State Department Mitchell B. Reiss arrived yesterday in Ankara for talks at the Foreign Ministry. Issues of Iraq and Greater Middle Eastern Initiative (GMEI) were taken up during Reiss' meeting with Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Ugur Ziyal on Friday, diplomatic sources told the Anatolia news agency. Sources said the U.S. official didn't convey any demands to Turkey and rather long-term prospects on these issues were discussed and characterized the meeting as, "general and philosophical." END TEXT.

19. (U) S/P Director Mitchell B. Reiss cleared this cable.  
EDELMAN